



blossoms of KINDNESS

Summer 2026

VOTE BLOSSOMS OF KINDNESS ASHEVILLE'S BEST NONPROFIT

Each summer the Asheville Media Group takes the pulse of our community with its annual Best of Asheville contest. It spans over 250 categories from consignment shops to doctor's offices to bakeries to music stores. And you guessed it, nonprofit organizations!

We might be a touch biased in our belief that Blossoms of Kindness is the best nonprofit organization in Asheville, but it seems so obvious. How else can you categorize the generosity of so many flowers gifted by local businesses and individuals? Or the generosity of so many volunteers coming together to repurpose those flowers into bouquets? Or that every Monday hundreds of bouquets are freely delivered to sites like women's shelters, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, the Veterans Hospital, dialysis centers, and the children's wing of Mission Hospital?

Blossoms of Kindness takes a beautiful resource that would have been discarded and turns it into a community gift. In our second year, 2024, we delivered over 3,000 bouquets. In 2025 we more than doubled that number, delivering over 8,000 bouquets. And 2026 is poised to be our most generous year ever! If you agree with us that this takes the Best of Asheville prize, please give us a daily vote at the link below.

Thank you for your belief in our mission and for your vote of confidence!



[Blossoms of Kindness](#)



[bloomsofkindness828](#)



[bloomsofkindness.org](#)



info@bloomsofkindness.org

BOUQUET TALLIES



Year to Date
3,658



Since 2024
14,110

BLOOMS OF KINDNESS IN THE COMMUNITY



In April Blooms of Kindness was delighted to learn that its flowers would be adding to the decor of a special formal dinner for the residents of **Safelight** of Hendersonville. The event was held at the Dandelion Cafe, the delicious cornerstone of Safelight's job training program. Our bouquets bloomed on every table and then some!



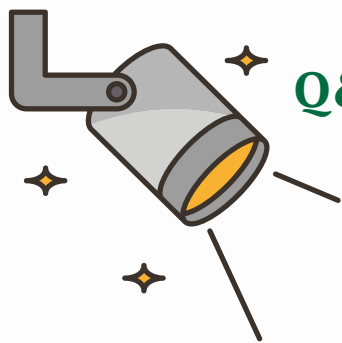
On April 25 Blooms of Kindness encouraged its volunteer community to support a favorite Weaverville nursery, **Flat Creek Farms**. In return, the generous Ryan and Sarah Bowers (left) donated 10% of the day's profits to Blooms of Kindness. Thank you, Bower family! It is generosity like this that keeps our supply closets stocked and our volunteers reaching more and more bouquet recipients. There to help were board members Jeannie Blackwelder, DeeDee Anders, Cindy Wolff, Linda Heaton, Helen Schell, and Barbara Butcher.



In May Blooms of Kindness lead a Bouquet Day workshop at **Black Mountain Neuro-Medical Center**. Patients and caregivers had a meaningful morning exploring the colors and textures of flowers as they designed beautiful arrangements to enjoy in their rooms. At left, Blooms team members Jeannie Blackwelder, Cindy Wolff, and Lisa Regush prep stems and greenery.



In May board member Cathy McDonald joined Michael Sundburg of **Hendo Today** for a live Facebook interview. She shared all about the good work Blooms of Kindness volunteers perform in the region.



Q&A WITH BOARD MEMBER BARBARA BUTCHER



You are one of the inaugural members of Blooms of Kindness, which back in 2022 was known as Random Acts of Flowers. How did this idea to work with recycled flowers come to be?

I learned about Random Acts of Flowers (RAF) from my neighbor who had recently moved from Knoxville, TN. She loved the flowers I grew in my yard, and she encouraged me to reach out to the organization. I emailed RAF of my interest in starting an Asheville chapter, but then COVID hit, and I didn't hear back from them. In early 2022 I received a RAF email. It spoke of another young woman from the area named Jenny Bauerfeind who also wanted to start a chapter. Jenny called, and we met at the Atlanta Bread Company near Biltmore. We hit it off; she couldn't have been a sweeter young lady! The next time we met she had gathered a few more passionate women, one of whom is our own Cathy McDonald, a board member who promotes Blooms of Kindness across multiple media platforms. So this is how the seed for Blooms of Kindness was initially planted.

What are some early milestones that RAF achieved where you thought, "Wow, this thing is taking off!"

I was amazed every time we shared our story with someone, and they exclaimed what a great idea this was! One of the early events we did was participate in an open-air market on Market St. in downtown Asheville. We spoke to people, gave away free flowers, and spread the word about our mission. Another event was hosting RAF founder Larsen Jay for a wine and flower fundraiser. He gave the keynote address and got our community fired up for our mission.

You've seen this organization through several stages of growth. What's the next important hurdle for Blooms of Kindness to clear?

We are a relatively young organization, so there is still organizational housekeeping that we're doing. What makes us great is that we have the finest volunteers. These are folks who roll up their sleeves because when they see a problem, they solve it. But we board members do not want to wear out these wonderful people. To that end we're creating standards of practice so that our procedures are well defined and easy to follow for any volunteer who wants to jump in and help manage a task.

What's one of your favorite activities to do within the organization?

It's working with the volunteers and seeing the bonds that occur between people. It takes my breath away when I see two people arranging flowers and asking, "Where are you from?" Everyone is so friendly. There are no strangers at Blooms of Kindness. Sometimes I can tell that a volunteer really needs us, needs the comradery. It's bigger than the flowers, it's about being part of a positive group.

What's your history with flowers? Any memories that stand out?

One of my earliest memories is of my Aunt Lottie. She grew the most beautiful flowers, bulbs mostly. I remember her arranging them and taking them to church. A particularly sweet memory is that my husband sent me a bouquet of yellow roses for each of our children's births, so those are four special bouquets I hold in my heart. Also, I was fortunate that my husband encouraged my love of flowers. He always said, "Get whatever flowers you want because they make you happy, and I want to keep you happy!"

If you could choose only one flower to smell for the rest of your life, what would it be? (It's not that you would have to smell it 24/7/365, but when you did want to smell a flower, it would be this.)

Lilies! For 10 years I cultivated a huge plot of a light-pink lilies. They smelled so good, and I had such fun giving them away. Unfortunately, a well-intentioned yard helper killed them off as he pursued weeds. But that smell is a gorgeous one!

Who is someone you think could really use a bouquet to lift their spirits?

I'd like to give one to the neighbor across the street who got me into all of this flower volunteerism. I also have another friend who is 99 years young, and I'd like to bring her a bouquet too!

Any special last words to the Blooms of Kindness volunteers or those thinking about volunteering?

I'm fortunate to volunteer alongside people who are passionate and full of creative ideas. What I admire most is how they use their talents to brighten people's lives and bring genuine joy to others. I'm not kidding when I say this will change your life. A Bouquet Day is worth all the energy it takes because it blesses you knowing that your efforts have blessed someone else.



VASE CRAFT!

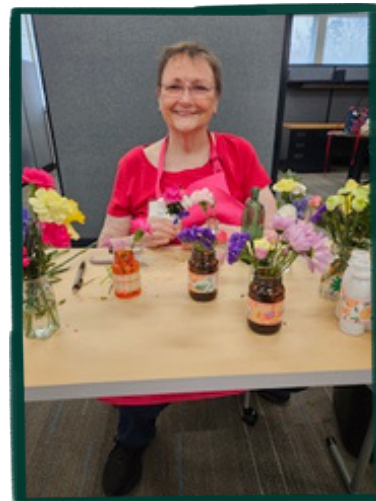


First-time volunteers are always amazed by the creativity of Bouquet Day. Flowers have arrived from local flower farms, weddings, and grocery store floral shops; the tables are staged with buckets of flowers in a riot of colors and textures; and volunteers are excitedly plucking stems and crafting floral designs. But what can really take a newcomer by surprise is the vase table.

While the vase table offers the types of standard glass vases folks would find in their mother or grandmother's cabinets, rising from this translucent landscape are hand-crafted creations that delight in their creativity and eco-friendliness. Some are transformed pasta sauce jars encircled with ribbon and bejeweled with rhinestones. Others are small jam and pickle jars festooned with plastic ladybugs and honeybees. Others are tennis ball containers now sporting painted landscapes or even seasonal motifs like American flags and Christmas trees.

Sylvia Harrow is one of the architects of these festive vases. She has a well-stocked craft room in her home that is crammed with treasures. She most often decorates with ribbon, but she has wrapped bottles in cloth too, like the time she cut up a thrifted shamrock scarf and created a half-dozen St. Patrick's Day vases. She finds the perfect materials through estate sales, Michaels, the Dollar Store, and even neighbors who she says know to "recycle something my way." Her favorite medium is currently sheets of vinyl with adhesive backing. She programs a design into her Cricut machine, slips in the desired color of vinyl, and out rolls the cut pieces waiting to be adhered to the glass jar. "They're just empty jars, and that's no fun," Sylvia mused. "It's nice to give them a little extra!"

Joyce Williams is another artist who brings her sense of design and style to each vase; one would never guess that her creations were formerly the home of pickled beets or black olives. Having been politely relocated by her husband from the kitchen, Joyce creates in fully-stocked She Shed. A former public-school, special education teacher, Joyce is resourceful and knows how to find supplies at a discount. She hits the usual crafts stores, but she loves shopping thrift stores. She and her daughter even have a favorite thrift store in Cary, NC which is so popular that locals queue up on the sidewalk each morning before it opens! Joyce is partial to designing Christmas vases because there's less color and variety in the seasonal flowers, and she feels that a decorated vase can help carry the bouquet. Valentine's Day vases are her second favorite because that date is also her birthday. Like her peers, Joyce usually starts with a wide



Sylvia's petite vases were formerly medicine bottles.



Judy and Joyce stand next to their Easter and spring vases.



Joyce retreats to her She Shed when she's ready to create.

ribbon first and embellishes from there. “I’m too lazy to scrub off that glue,” she laughs. “There’s no cleaning a jar with Goo Gone for me, just a ribbon to cover it!” Her vases are beautiful by any measure, and Joyce believes her efforts communicate something very important to those who receive a Blooms of Kindness bouquet. “It shows some one cared and went to the trouble for you. It brings an extra burst of brightness into what might feel like a sterile environment,” she explained.

Judy Testo also shares her inspired vases with the Bouquet Day volunteers. Judy takes oil and watercolor painting classes and often finds herself in galleries and museums. She collects ideas from these spaces, as well as Pinterest and Instagram. When Judy is ready to create, she sits at her kitchen table which has shelves of thematic supplies within arms’ reach. She often reaches first for wire-edged ribbon at a width of 2.5 inches. Once she secures it with a glue gun, she is ready to design a scene. A volunteer-favorite are her garden scenes featuring actual wooden fences in miniature, staged with flowers and bees. Bringing a vase into 3-dimensionality is a newer pursuit and one she finds very satisfying. “At first I wondered if decorating the vases would take away from the beauty of the flowers,” Judy said, “but then I considered that our bouquets are going to people who need an extra touch. Perhaps the bee that I glued onto a vase triggers a memory and brings happiness. That’s why I do this. I am 78 years young, and as long as my hands, feet, and mind are working, I’ll keep doing this. And one day I hope people will bring such gifts to me.”

As for Linda and Ken Heaton, the vase is a family affair! Linda helps collect tennis ball canisters and her husband Ken uses a Dremel tool to resize them to better accommodate the bouquets. The two pride themselves in keeping the plastic canisters out of the landfill, knowing that once they are filled with bouquets they’ll likely return to Blooms of Kindness and be filled with flowers again. “We can’t really call them upcycled when we’re making the canisters shorter, can we?” Linda said with a laugh. “So these are our lowcycled vases!” Linda also takes a novel approach to decorating them. She hosts a gathering in her Carolina Room, spreads out the ribbons, glue guns, stickers, and other decorative elements, and the group creates together for a few hours. “I tend to go for the paint pens and design mandalas,” she explained. “I’m more of a geometrics person.” Like anyone with an eye toward vase craft, Linda has shelves that overflow with crafting supplies. She is always on the search for materials that might add an element of whimsy. “Who knows,” she mused, “maybe someone wants to keep the vase as a memory, even refilling it with their own flowers.”

These creative woman are a perfect illustration of how flowers have grown the Blooms of Kindness community in so many heart-centered ways. This particular combination of creativity and eco-friendliness makes each delivered vase an even more special Blooms of Kindness offering.



Linda holds tennis canisters that have been made smaller through Ken’s efforts.



Ken uses a Dremel to put the finishing touches on a new vase.



Vases filled with flowers are readied for delivery by volunteer Ben Butcher.

GET INVOLVED WITH BLOOMS OF KINDNESS



**Drop
Off Your
Vases for
Reuse!**

(Anything with an opening up to 3.5 inches, including clean jars from your pantry or fridge!)



Weaverville Location

ETC Consignment, 145 Garrison Branch Rd.



Woodfin Location

Reverie Nail Salon, 40 N. Merrimon Ave., Ste. 101



Asheville Location

AmeriHealth Caritas NC Wellness and Opportunity Center, 216 Ashland Ave.



Hendersonville County Locations

Blue Mountain Consignment, 636 Greenville Hwy

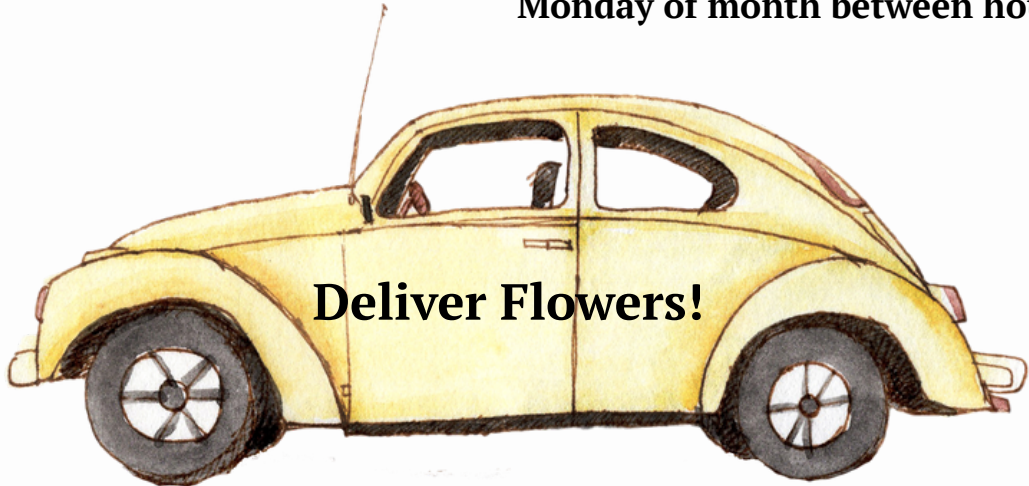
Blue Ridge Community College Library, 180 W.

Campus Dr, Flat Rock

Bullington Gardens, 95 Upper Red Oak Trail

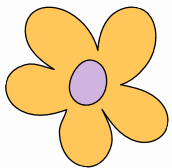
First Congregational Church, 1735 5th Ave (3rd

Monday of month between hours of 9-12)



Deliver Flowers!

Delivering is the perfect volunteer job for someone with a midday hour to spare on any Monday. Sound like you? Click on [this volunteer link](#) to get started!



While flowers are donated to us freely and the Board of Directors is an all-volunteer one, we still have considerable operating costs. If our mission calls to you, please consider donating any amount that works for you. We are grateful for those who help keep our supply closet full in this way.





Our mission is to spread kindness, enhance wellbeing, and strengthen connections by delivering repurposed, donated flowers to individuals in our community, including those in healthcare facilities, crisis housing, and child/veteran/senior settings.

